



ILLINOIS

Pat Quinn, Governor

DEPARTMENT OF CENTRAL MANAGEMENT SERVICES

James P. Sledge, Director

January 2010


The Honorable Pat Quinn
Governor of Illinois
207 State House
Springfield, Illinois 62706

Dear Governor Quinn:

I am pleased to submit the 2009 Annual Report on State Employees' Child Care Centers. Working parents are faced with the challenging task of finding quality childcare at an affordable cost. The State of Illinois is demonstrating its commitment to the care of employees' children through the operation of two on-site childcare centers located in Chicago and Springfield. Each of these centers provides a valuable service and benefit to state employees.

The State of Illinois remains committed to its employees by helping them meet their childcare needs. The state will strive to provide employees with the most innovative and high-quality work environment possible.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "James P. Sledge", is written over the printed name and title.

James P. Sledge
Director



2009 Annual Report on State Employee Child Care Centers

Overview

Pursuant to 30 ILCS 590, known as the State Agency Employees Child Care Services Act, the Department of Central Management Services may authorize state agencies to contract for the provision of child care services for its employees. To that end, the State of Illinois presently operates two on-site child care centers, one located in Chicago and one in Springfield, as evidence of its commitment to provide a valuable service and benefit to state employees

State of Illinois Child Development Center

The State of Illinois Child Development Center, located in the Michael A. Bilandic Building, 160 N. LaSalle Street, Chicago, Illinois, celebrated its 17th successful year in September of 2009. Early Child Care Services, Inc., Stacy Olszewski, Director, manages the Center. The Center was recently accredited for the fourth time with the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) which will expire in 2013. Ms. Olszewski has also received her Director Credential from NAEYC.

The Center is pleased to announce that they have retained the same staff of full-time teachers for over six years. There are three full-time teachers in each of the four classrooms with an average of 16 children (1:5 ratio) per room. Children ages two through five are provided full-time care with priority enrollment given to children of state employees. The Center has been running to near capacity since 2001. When there is space available, the Center provides care on a day-to-day basis for children who are not enrolled full-time in the center and a primary care giver is unavailable.

In 2004, the Center began providing care for six- and seven-year old students with a cultural summer program. The children are able to take full advantage of the museums, libraries and special events located in the Chicago area. The summer program has proven to be a huge success as parents are offered high quality summer child care that includes fun and educational opportunities for their children.

The Center offers spacious classrooms, a separate Discovery Room designed by Kohl Museum, and a large outdoor playground located on the deck of the 21st floor of the Bilandic Building. The Center is staffed by dedicated and highly qualified early childhood teachers who provide a developmentally appropriate curriculum in a safe and nurturing environment. The innovative curriculum, based on the belief that children learn through play, includes whole language, math their way, science, social studies, art, music, movement, and computers. The children grow and develop socially, emotionally, cognitively, and physically during their time in the Center.

In 2008, the Center became part of the Chicago Public Schools in the Community Partnership Program which has enabled the Center to:

1. Increase their employees' salaries based on their educational qualifications;
2. Financially assist Center employees to earn bachelor's degrees; and
3. Increase training opportunities for their staff.

By taking advantage of the program's opportunities to better educate, train, and compensate the Center's employees, the Center's children and parents are afforded higher quality child care and education.

Bright Horizons Child Care Center, Department of Revenue

Bright Horizons celebrated its 15th year at the Department of Revenue, Willard Ice Building, 101 W. Jefferson Street, Springfield, IL. To commemorate this milestone, Bright Horizons' Director, Tracey Tiskos, and child care teacher, Elizabeth Robinson, organized a family event at Capital Elite All-Stars Gym with tumbling, balloon art, face painting, and a potluck dinner. Another exciting development for the Center was the award of a five-year contract to Bright Horizons to continue the child care services at the Department of Revenue.

In addition to the Bright Horizons' Director, the Center's five full-time employees and one part-time teacher provide care and education to children ages fifteen months to five years of age. Through the World at Their Fingertips curriculum, the focus is placed on math, science, language and art education. The READY FOR SCHOOL curriculum for the preschool children continues to be a focus. In January 2010, this curriculum will be enhanced with the addition of Handwriting without Tears and Everyday Math programs.

The Bright Horizons family and the early childhood community in general suffered a huge loss this year with the passing of Education Director, Jim Greenman, an advocate for all children, creator of the curriculum used at the Center, and author of many early childhood books. His teaching methods and advocacy for children have inspired the Center's staff to provide the children with the best curriculum and child care environment possible.

This year, the children at the Center participated in a Walk-On fundraiser that collected over \$200.00. The money was donated to the Bright Horizons Foundation to create a "Bright Space" room at the Hessed House Shelter in Aurora, Illinois. This newly decorated and furnished room filled with toys and books will provide children a more positive environment during their stay at Hessed House.

As the end of the year approaches, the Center is preparing for the annual Winter Singing in the Lobby at the Department of Revenue. This is one of many service projects that provide opportunities to create a greater community atmosphere and awareness.

Dependent Care Assistance Program

State of Illinois' employees can pay for the care of their dependent children with tax-free dollars by utilizing flexible spending accounts. Employees may set aside up to \$5,000.00, annually, through payroll deduction, for this purpose.

The Illinois Department of Central Management Services reports strong employee participation since the program's inception in 1987. In calendar year 2009, 1,724 employees statewide participated in the program with contributions totaling \$6,577,224.00.

Flexible Work Schedules

The Illinois Personnel Code was amended in July 1992 to be in compliance with Public Act 87-552. The Act requires each department to develop a plan of flexible work schedules designed to reduce the need for employees to find child care outside the home and to help balance time spent with family and work. A review of the plans submitted biennially by each agency to the Illinois Department of Central Management Services and the Illinois General Assembly indicate that all agencies are offering flexible work schedules to assist employees in meeting child care needs.